

## OUR OWN DEADLY WEAPONS

Americans Are Not So Far Behind in Producing Engines of War.

## FACTS ABOUT OUR RIFLES

Magazine Guns of American Manufacture Are in Many Instances Superior to Foreign Products—A Lack of Appreciation by the Different Home Purchasers.

It is strange that the American press, faithfully noting the advances of European skill in the manufacture of weapons, should give so little attention to similar home industries, superior in many respects to the foreign. When the Lohr and Mannlicher rifles were brought out there were items and illustrations by the score for months, though these arms are not more ingenious in construction than our own magazine guns, and cannot be as rapidly or as easily fired.

The history of the manufacture of arms in this country is one of rapid and varied improvement. The great variety of game, and a natural, perhaps hereditary, taste for rifle shooting, has led to these results. To the sporting inclinations of our citizens, therefore, the credit is due, rather than to any murderous designs upon our neighbors. It is only lately that our military element has taken from its Rip Van Winkle slumbers to discover the antiquity of our "Springfields."

The first breech-loading rifle to demonstrate its equality with the muzzle loader was the Sharps, which has long since ceased to be made. Its contemporary, the old Remington, is still manufactured, though it is now superseded by a later model, having a sliding breech block of steel depressed and raised by means of a thumb lever on the side of the frame.

It is a most compact and simple action, the system of closing the breech being the strongest possible to devise. The lever might with advantage be replaced by a screw, but the heavier calibers it is not always possible to extract the shell. The accuracy of the Remington is a matter of history, not only here but in foreign countries. It has been extensively used in army service.

Somewhat similar to the Remington is the Winchester single shot, a comparatively recent production. It is frequently called the breech block moves up and down in the frame, actuated by a lever, which is larger and situated beneath the frame.

The lever is linked directly to the breech block, and the hammer is hung there. The forward movement of the lever drops the breech block and hammer, exposing the chamber and extracting the spent shell. The reverse movement closes the breech and cocks the hammer. It is extremely strong and simple, with the exception of the connection between the hammer and trigger, which is somewhat complicated. It is made by the manufacturers of the magazine rifle of the same name.

Many travelers, hunters, and taxidermists have written enthusiastically of the Maynard rifle. Its exceeding convenience arises from the infrequent necessity of reloading. The action is very simple and strong; a hand lever beneath the frame, linked to the barrel, lifts the latter when thrown forward, opening the breech, the hammer, which is attached to the barrel, locks the barrel in position, and leaves the hammer safe at half-cock.

Any number of barrels either short or rifle, of different calibers, may be fitted to the same stock, and are detached easily by turning down and drawing out a small lever in the side of the frame. One is thus permitted to carry an assortment of weapons, which can be picked readily, all having the same stock. This latter feature is of inestimable value where the stock is fitted exactly to the individual's requirements of length, weight, and shape. This has been for years one of our leading sporting and target weapons, a rival of the Sharps and Remington in the past, and disputing to-day the claims of the Remington of later date.

To any one who has ever visited a shooting gallery, a notable weapon in which "you took the button and it does the rest" is the Stevens. Such is the Stevens—pressure upon a knob on the side of the frame lifts the barrel, exposing the breech and the chamber. The Stevens is a mechanism especially suited to small caliber, such as the famous .22, and is made in all sorts of styles, shapes and weights, some of which, such as the "quant" style, with its detachable barrel and stock, may be carried in a valise, or a good, good pocket. In consequence, it is the mullum in parvo of the canoeist and bicyclist, and is a favorite with ladies.

The latest rifle is the production of the Stevens Arms Company, and is perfectly adapted to the needs of the sportsman. It is made in all calibers. Its special feature is interchangeable barrels, easily taken from the frame and replaced with one of different length, weight, and shape. The Winchester in appearance and action, but the hammer does not fall with the breech block, but is brought to half or full-cock by a link connecting the lever with the breech block. The link is adjustable, so that the user can have his choice as to whether the hammer shall be let at half or full-cock.

One of the most interesting features of the history of firearms is that which relates to the invention and use of magazine rifles, which, with smokeless powder, have so revolutionized modern warfare. They were first used efficiently under the name of "King's mountain," N. C., during the late civil war, the weapon being the work of Henry, predecessor of the Winchester in the arms of the Confederates.

It was a great surprise to the Confederates, who were beaten off by much inferior numbers, owing to the fact that the storm of bullets from the Henrys, the breech-loading rifle, was another attempt to use magazine arms. First, the breech-loading rifles carried in the tubular magazines of the weapons, occasioned by jolting on the march, soon consisted them to a lasting disadvantage. The breech-loading rifles of the Henry system used in all our sporting weapons are (1) the danger of explosion from pressure of the bullet on one cartridge upon the primer of the next; (2) the danger of explosion from the bullet by the same means; and (3) the change of balance in the arm, caused by the emptying of the magazine.

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## smaller caliber, and has a detachable barrel and magazine.

Naturally, after the advent of the Winchester, and its success, it was only a matter of time before the Winchester and Colt came to the fore. Of these the Winchester is operated by a finger lever which, when pulled, throws the lever forward and is pivoted upon a frame. A backward extension of the lever engages a steel upright locking bolt, which is drawn forward by the lever, which has, however, a shorter throw and is pivoted upon a frame. A backward extension of the lever engages a steel upright locking bolt, which is drawn forward by the lever, which has, however, a shorter throw and is pivoted upon a frame.

The return movement lifts the carrier, chases the barrel with its contents, and lastly the locking bolt is forced back to position. The gun opens and the shell is ejected from the side, leaving the top solid, the advantages of which are that the eyes are protected in case of premature explosion, the shell is not thrown in the face, and rain or snow are not so liable to get in the magazine. It has the easiest manipulation of any of our magazine arms. For fancy or quick shooting and the smaller varieties of game, including deer, it is therefore particularly adapted and extensively used. They are extremely accurate, simple in construction and readily taken apart.

A few years ago there were five different magazine arms in our market. Competition lowering the prices made profitable the manufacture of the least popular and more expensive, with a consequent cessation in the production of the more expensive models in the third. This last the Colt inaugurated a new departure in the way of manipulation, the left hand being used and the leverage changed to the right. The new model is a straight steel lever, the first motion of which raises the two locking bolts, and the second motion of the lever unlocks the latter and moving it to the rear.

The action in other respects resembles the other arms, except that the hammer is held open by a special device until the breech is closed and locked, permitting the riflemen to fire the contents of the magazine without reloading. The action is very simple and strong; a hand lever beneath the frame, linked to the barrel, lifts the latter when thrown forward, opening the breech, the hammer, which is attached to the barrel, locks the barrel in position, and leaves the hammer safe at half-cock.

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## Lay Sermons for Sunday Reading

The mind of man has halted and stumbled over the old question of the soulists, "What truth."

To the shallow refuge of a sneeringly held dialectic there remains the simple declaration that "God is truth," which seems to be the primal declaration of the finality of Spinoza, that "there can be but one complete, or concrete fact." At all events, we may conclude that any newly discovered and accepted truth can only be a fragment, or rather a segment of the complete circle of truth, and, therefore, must ultimately be made to fit into perfect conjunction with all other segments. Also, that the acceptance of any new truth involves all the consequences of acceptance and adoption; and if conflict seems to arise between the new and the old, it can be stayed by no peace platitudes; it is a fight to the death. The new must be ejected, or the old must find its place as a long cherished assumption of the past. So every new discovery comes, "not to bring peace, but a sword." And this is the sword that "pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."

It is certain that the ancients—the Hindoos, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, the Greeks—the rotundity of the earth as an astronomical necessity, as such knowledge was necessary to their divisions of time and their calculation of eclipses; but we have no evidence of their having known it geographically. Under the papal banishment of mathematics in the medieval age of darkness, the astronomical recognition was forgotten. In Christianity until Copernicus, Galileo, and Bruno insisted upon the supremacy of the divine spirit over earthly things, the earth, the sun, and the planets were held to be stationary, and the sun revolved around the earth.

When this new factor had found a place for itself in the world, it was not long before it required further demonstration, and Columbus sailed west from land to land. Here was another step taken. Then came the discovery of the new world. They have long been favorite weapons in Asia, South America, parts of Europe and Africa. One firm alone has an output of 50,000 sporting guns per year. Our government is now considering the importance and extent of the industry. We may well consider their superiority as proven now that our English cousins are beginning to use them extensively in India and Africa. A recent illustration in the Pall Mall Gazette shows Mr. Selous, their most distinguished hunter, with a Remington. He is now one of the most popular of our sporting weapons.

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To all who are interested in the most important of all present subjects of study, Professor Dabney's new book, "The Ascent of Man," comes as a boon. Its closing chapter, "Evolution," sheds a flood of light on many hitherto vexing questions. He shows plain the evolution of the human race from its own root, neither the "cock from the trunk," but given the seed in the environment, the miracle of growth results, because the seed and environment are one—of the same species of one divine thought, the combination of unseen spiritual forces to produce a result. Evolution is because of evolution.

"But, after all, the miracle of evolution is not in the process, but the product. Beside the wonder of the result, the problem of the process is a mere curiosity of science. For what is the product? It is not a mountain and valley, sky and sea, flower and star, this glorious and beautiful world in which man's body finds its home. It is not the godlike gift